



EUGÈNE CUVELIER

## The Springs of Achievement Series on the Art of Photography

Taking his camera where most of his artist friends carried their easels and paint boxes—through the streets of Barbizon and along the wooded paths of the Forest of Fontainebleau—Eugène Cuvelier brought the spirit of mid-nineteenth-century landscape painting to the still young medium of photography. His carefully composed and richly printed photographs were admired by the pre-Impressionists, contributing to their vision while drawing inspiration from their paintings. The Metropolitan Museum of Art celebrates this cross-fertilization of photography and the other arts, giving overdue recognition to the creator of some of the most lyrical landscapes in early photography.

Springs Industries is proud to sponsor this beautiful and timely exhibition at its only American venue. The most recent addition to The Springs of Achievement Series on the Art of Photography, now in its eighteenth year, this exhibition exemplifies our commitment to honor creative expression and to bring to the public outstanding achievements in photographic art.

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Springs Industries

# EUGÈNE CUVELIER

Photographer in the Circle of Corot



THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



Eugène Cuvelier. The Forest of Fontainebleau. 1863. Salted paper print from paper negative, 25.9 x 19.9 cm. Rolf Mayer Collection, Stuttgart

# Eugène Cuvelier, Photographer in the Circle of Corot

Malcolm Daniel

The Auberge Ganne, a family-run inn in the small village of Barbizon, was often a site of merriment and camaraderie in the 1850s and 1860s. Artists from Paris, the provinces, and places as far afield as America gathered there to enjoy food and drink, to discuss their forays into the nearby Forest of Fontainebleau, to sketch scenes on the walls, and to debate the artistic ideas of the day. On March 7, 1859, the gathering was especially spirited; the Gannes' barn was decorated for a celebration and the entire village was present. Each new arrival toasted the innkeeper's daughter Marie-Louise (known as Louise), and, by evening's end, the whole crowd was following the sixty-two-year-old painter Camille Corot in a line-dance through an obstacle course of empty bottles.<sup>1</sup> The festivities honored the marriage of Louise Ganne to a young artist from Arras, Eugène Cuvelier. Earlier that day, the twenty-one-year-olds had pledged their fidelity to one another with the painters Corot and Théodore Rousseau as witnesses for the bridegroom.<sup>2</sup>

Cuvelier had become friends with Corot at home in Arras in 1852 or 1853, and had first visited Barbizon with his painting teacher Constant Dutilleux in 1856, but his marriage to Louise Ganne placed him even more squarely in the midst

of the many artists who frequented Barbizon and who cleared the plein-air-painting trail that led to Impressionism. Where others carried their paint boxes and easels, however, Eugène Cuvelier carried his camera and tripod and, in the years that followed his marriage to Louise, he developed into the most sensitive photographer of Fontainebleau Forest. Wide-ranging in expression and subject, his sylvan views masterfully render the dappled light of the forest interior, the palpable atmosphere of a misty clearing in the wood, the muscular power of leafless oaks rising against a wintry sky, and the delicacy of a sapling in spring.

## Adalbert Cuvelier

Eugène owed both his photographic skill and his friendship with Corot to his father, Adalbert (1812–1871), a well-to-do merchant in the northern French city of Arras.<sup>3</sup> A refiner of vegetable oils and sugar by profession, he was also an amateur painter and an accomplished photographer. In the early 1850s, when photography was barely a dozen years old and its processes were more experimental cuisine than codified procedure, Adalbert made extraordinary pictures. Only a few dozen of his photographs survive, but these give ample



evidence of the technical proficiency and artistic vision that won him the respect of his fellow painters and that provided the foundation for Eugène's photographic work. Adalbert's surviving photographs were made in and around Arras and include views of the town's square, rustic huts, and farmyard still-lifes; among his scenes of the nearby Scarpe River is one showing painters at work under umbrellas (ill. p. 5).

Adalbert Cuvelier also made a series of portraits in Arras in the early 1850s that are unusual in their celebration of the common man. It is unlikely that we will ever know the identity of his sitters, but they are strong and engaging characters, presented without pretense. A bearded, muscular man sits on a barrel surrounded by roof tiles and huge gears, his arms akimbo, his hands forming blunt fists against his

leather apron. A young man in painter's smock and straw hat sits pensively, leaning against a garden wall. Another young man—his hat lying beside him on the ground, his baggy sleeves rolled to the elbows, and his pants held up by wide suspenders—is absorbed in thought, separated momentarily from the activity of the world around him, which is described only in blurred patches of tone (ill. p. 6). It is as if one of Courbet's stone breakers has stopped to rest for an instant before Adalbert's camera.

#### The Cuveliers, Corot, and the *Cliché-verre*

Camille Corot, the premier landscape painter in France, frequently visited his close friend Constant Dutilleux, a painter at the center of artistic circles in Arras. In April 1852, through

Eugène Cuvelier. *The Boundary of Barbizon*. Early 1860s. Salted paper print from paper negative, 25.4 x 33.7 cm. Private collection

Dutilleux, he befriended Adalbert Cuvelier, who photographed him as well as his canvases.<sup>4</sup> One such photograph (ill. p. 1), probably from that year, is a view of Dutilleux's studio with Corot's *Soir classique* (painted in Arras in 1851) on an easel draped with the artist's smock; a drawn *académie* is pinned to the wall at the right and a photographic portrait leans on a ledge at the left. More than a mere document of Corot's painting, Adalbert's image is a still-life of pictures, layering modes of representation and suggesting the fruitful commingling of mediums that enriched the work of both men.

Because his impressive photographs have rarely been seen until now, Adalbert Cuvelier is better known to art historians for having introduced the *cliché-verre* to Corot, and it was, in fact, this shared endeavor that cemented the friendship between the painter and the photographer. The technique of *cliché-verre* (literally, "glass negative," but generally used to refer

to the resulting print) was first conceived by the inventor of paper photography, William Henry Fox Talbot, and was rediscovered by others including Cuvelier and his fellow photographer in Arras, Léandre Grandguillaume. Cuvelier and Grandguillaume showed Corot how a glass plate, covered with fogged photographic emulsion or printer's ink, could be drawn on with an etching needle or, alternatively, how the bare sheet of glass could be painted to create a composition in varying degrees of opacity and transparency. These hand-drawn or hand-painted glass negatives were then printed on photographic paper in the same manner as negatives made in a camera.<sup>5</sup>

Corot took to the method immediately, making *clichés-verre* for Adalbert to print (fifteen of Corot's plates, including two now in the Metropolitan Museum, remained in the Cuvelier family until 1911). Corot, in turn, introduced



Adalbert Cuvelier. Along the Scarpe River, near Arras. 1853. Salted paper print from paper negative, 19.6 x 25.7 cm. Private collection



Adalbert Cuvelier. Seated Man, ca. 1852. Salted paper print from paper negative, 28 x 22 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

Delacroix and other artists to the process, and eventually produced sixty-six *clichés-verre*—two-thirds of his graphic output. All of Corot's *clichés-verre* are characterized by a remarkably free, gestural line. In *The Ambush* (ill. back cover), perhaps more than in any other *cliché-verre*, Corot used the painted-glass technique with a perfect understanding that the continuous tonal scale of photography could serve not just to draw lines but to render the broader patchwork and blurry movement of light and shadow in the forest.

In the early 1860s, Eugène Cuvelier introduced the principal painters of Barbizon, among them Charles-François Daubigny, Paul Huet, Jean-François Millet, and Théodore Rousseau, to *cliché-verre*, guided them through the process, and printed their compositions. Although the Cuveliers were thus the catalysts for a brief flowering of this hybrid technique of photographic printmaking, only a single *cliché-verre* by Eugène, and none by his father, survives.<sup>6</sup> By cultivating the *cliché-verre*, the Cuveliers provided the Barbizon artists with a quick new means of sketching, but it is their extraordinary photographs that had a greater aesthetic influence on their fellow painters and that now constitute their more lasting artistic legacy.

#### Eugène Cuvelier

At the time of his wedding in 1859, Eugène Cuvelier had no profession and resided with his parents in Arras; how (or whether) he earned a living thereafter is somewhat unclear, but Adalbert's financial support certainly eased the way for the young couple.<sup>7</sup> Eugène listed his occupation in the Auberge Ganne register as "painter" in 1856 and 1857, but this youthful ambition seems never to have developed into more than an avocation, since none of his paintings has survived or been identified. On his 1858 visit to Barbizon he described himself as a "mécanicien" (mechanic or engineer),<sup>8</sup> and in his marriage contract the following year he listed the tools and products of his machine shop as his principal assets. He designed and built a small steamboat (named *Marie-Louise* for his wife, and pictured in one of his photographs), a machine gun, and small working models of a steam-driven locomobile and a Crampton locomotive. The models, dis-

played at the 1873 exhibition of art, agriculture, and industry in Arras, were described as jewels that belonged under glass by one reviewer, who also noted that Cuvelier's photographs, shown nearby, "reproduce with gripping truthfulness the wildest sites in the Forest of Fontainebleau."<sup>9</sup> In both endeavors Cuvelier worked in an enviable time when science and art were not opposed but rather were practiced with utilitarian and aesthetic integrity.

Eugène was taught the practical aspects of photography by his father but learned from him, too, that a successful photographer had to possess more than mere technical proficiency. "Many people who never concerned themselves with drawing or painting . . . figured that the discovery of [photography] would immediately permit anyone who could buy a camera and all of the equipment, along with instructions for using it, to create marvels," the elder Cuvelier wrote. "They were wrong. I wouldn't say you have to be a painter or draftsman to make good photographs, but you have to be an artist, that is to say you have to *have the sentiment of painting*. . . . *Photography, properly understood, is not a trade, but an art, and, consequently [the photographer's] aesthetic sensibility and knowledge must be embodied in his works just as those of a painter are expressed in his paintings.*"<sup>10</sup>

Eugène was well situated to learn about artistic sentiment. Besides his father's guidance, he studied with the two principal painters in Arras—Dutilleux and Xavier Dourlens—embarking on painting expeditions along the Scarpe in the *Marie-Louise* with Dourlens and his students.<sup>11</sup> (In truth, smoking, drinking, and singing seem to have been as common in Dourlens's atelier as artistic instruction.) The visits of Corot and Rousseau to the Cuvelier family also made a deep impression on the aspiring young artist.

Eugène was a teenager when his father first took up photography, and he undoubtedly learned to make pictures at his father's side.<sup>12</sup> Most of his surviving photographs, however, probably date from the early 1860s, shortly after his marriage. Photography appears to have been a personal rather than a professional pursuit for Eugène. Aside from exhibitions of the Société française de photographie, in which he displayed views of Barbizon, the Forest of Fontainebleau, and



345



Eugène Cuvelier. *Beech Tree near the Bodmer Oak*. Early 1860s. Salted paper print from paper negative, 26.5 x 33.8 cm. Private collection

the environs of Arras in 1864, 1869, and 1870, he rarely exhibited his photographs.<sup>13</sup> He seems never to have sought government commissions, operated a studio, or offered his work to the public in published form. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the rarity of his photographs suggests a very limited printing of his negatives—with few exceptions, only one or two examples of each known image survive.

### The Photographs

Making photographs in small numbers for himself and for his artist friends, Cuvelier could lavish care on his prints and achieve a tonal and textural richness rarely found in the work of commercial photographers, who necessarily produced many more copies of each image. Uncharacteristically for a photographer working in the 1860s, he used paper negatives and frequently made salted paper prints—processes that his father taught him in the early 1850s.<sup>14</sup> Cuvelier must have employed these slightly antiquated materials by design rather than by default, for collodion-on-glass negatives and commercially prepared albumen paper (which he also used on many occasions) were the universal norm by 1860. In choosing the more difficult and time-consuming processes typical of a decade earlier he was surely motivated by a preference for their aesthetic qualities—notably, the soft, fibrous texture of the paper negative, with its tendency to mass light and shadow, and the velvety mat surface of the salted paper print, which can range in color from eggplant and blue black to subtle shades of lavender, rose, and gray.

The vast majority of Eugène Cuvelier's photographs were made in the Forest of Fontainebleau—most, within an easy walk of Barbizon. By the time he arrived in the area, the forest surrounding the Palace of Fontainebleau—once the site of royal hunts and, more recently, the domain of highway robbers, hermits, and isolated woodsmen—was a destination for more than a handful of painters and photographers. Train service from Paris to Fontainebleau, established in 1849, made the palace and forest an easy destination; by 1860, one hundred thousand Parisians a year are said to have made the day trip. When Millet settled in Barbizon it was to escape the turmoil of the 1848 revolution and an outbreak of cholera; a



decade later, the social pressures of bourgeois city life and the ills of modern industrial society made nature seem a temporary salvation for the average Parisian. Moreover, the Forest of Fontainebleau was extensive and varied; in its 42,000 acres, dense woods were intercut with rocky gorges, marshes, and sandy clearings. If it looked like a wilderness to city folk, the forest was, in fact, tamed and tractable by 1860; guidebooks steered artists and tourists alike along one hundred miles of footpaths, past a thousand fancifully named trees, boulders, caves, and other features of the landscape.<sup>15</sup>

Instead of cataloguing its points of interest, however, Cuvelier's photographs capture the experience of the forest. He more often pictured a fern-edged path leading to the "Sully" or a lichen-covered rock near the "Reine Blanche"

than the landmark trees themselves. In this, he followed the lead of painters who, for decades, had sketched in the forest, rather than the example of topographic photographers who, by 1860, were roaming the world and bringing home views of its principal monuments and natural wonders. Why did Cuvelier photograph a beech tree near the Bodmer Oak (ill. p. 8) instead of the oak itself? Perhaps because at that spot the ground rose gently to the base of the beech as if the tree, stretching toward the sun, had pulled the earth's skin, and because the summer sunlight glistened on the leafy forest floor and brush, filtered through the fine leaves of the beech and its neighbors, and glowed through the million interstices of the forest canopy. In another forest view (ill. p. 2), Cuvelier pointed his camera toward the sun, which blazes through a

Eugène Cuvelier. *Franchard*. 1865. Salted paper print from paper negative, 19.8 x 25.9 cm. Private collection

clearing at the edge of a cool, shadowy stand of trees; three slender verticals rise in the center of the picture, their branches and leaves dissolved in the bright sunlight. The grainy texture of the paper negative from which the print was made softens the glare, casts a diaphanous veil over the scene, and renders the underbrush as a pattern of shimmering reflected sunlight. In yet another scene (ill. p. 12), printed in exquisitely subtle shades of eggplant and grayish lavender, two mighty sentinels guard the entrance to a narrow footpath that carries us through the brush and into the misty mystery of the forest interior; Cuvelier invites us to feel the cool, humid autumn air and smell the earthy fragrance of decaying leaves.

People rarely appear in Cuvelier's photographs but there are hints that Fontainebleau is not the forest primeval.

Roads and trails, delicately woven sapling fences, piles of cut firewood, and directional signs reveal that the woods have been domesticated—that nature has been made inviting instead of threatening. While a few of Cuvelier's images, particularly those of the rocky gorges of Apremont and Franchard, and of the boulders of Macherin, show a more savage landscape, even in the *désert* or wilderness beloved by François I there are usually traces of man. In one photograph, a figure at their summit gives scale to the enormous rocks (ill. p. 10), while in another, footsteps in the sand reveal a human presence; in only a few images (ill. below) are we plunged into primordial chaos with no sense of scale or location. Are these stones or mountains? Is this Death Valley or Antarctica?



Eugène Cuvelier. *The Sands of Macherin*. 1863. Albumen silver print from paper negative, 20 x 25.9 cm. Courtesy of Ezra Mack, New York



Still other Cuvelier photographs show the humble subjects popular with his painter friends—the corner of a rustic farmyard, the streets of Barbizon, grapevines in a garden courtyard, and after-the-hunt still-lifes—as well as the château and gardens of nearby Fleury. In the mid-1860s, Cuvelier also made photographic excursions in and around Arras (including Achicourt, Fampoux, and Rivière), where the heavily pruned trees, lakes, open fields, and other aspects of the landscape afforded possibilities different from those to be found in the Forest of Fontainebleau. One particularly serene photograph, *Fampoux, near Arras* (ill. p. 13), strongly recalls the work of Daubigny, who often painted in his floating studio; beyond the rushy foreground, the trees on the distant shore are reflected in the still water. The entire scene is softened by the

medium of the paper negative, so that water, trees, sky, and reflections seem like dabs of aubergine paint on canvas.

What carries Cuvelier's pictures beyond a passage through the seasons or a tour of the forest—what made them emblems of their own age and commands the admiration of ours—is their artistic sentiment, the element that Adalbert described as essential to the photographer's art. On the one hand, we find a lingering romanticism, an expression of awe at nature's power and dimension: In a blue-black print, *Near the Cavern, after a Fire* (ill. p. 15), two men sit on boulders beneath the charred skeletons of twin pine trees and look into the eerie silence of a featureless distance like figures in a Caspar David Friedrich painting. On the other hand, a still stronger current of naturalism flows through most of

Eugène Cuvelier. The Forest of Fontainebleau. Early 1860s. Salted paper print from paper negative, 19.8 x 25.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, The Howard Gilman Foundation and Joyce and Robert Menschel Gifts, 1988 (1988.1031)

Cuvelier's photographs: In these, nature is intimate, rather than sublime, and art describes sensation rather than wonder. Most important, the artist emphasizes "effect," the rendering of light and atmosphere that was so central to the late work of Corot and his followers—and, ultimately, to the Impressionists.

#### Cuvelier and the Barbizon Painters

If the photographs of Adalbert and Eugène Cuvelier and the paintings of the pre-Impressionists appear similar, it is, in part, because they shared an aesthetic milieu and an experience of the forest as a place of meditative isolation. That Cuvelier was inspired by the paintings of Corot, Rousseau, Millet, and others is beyond doubt; that his photographs and those by fellow landscape photographers influenced the painters is also true. Eugène's personal friendships with other artists, his training as

a painter, and his formidable talent positioned him perfectly to play a role in this give-and-take. His painter friends naturally took an interest in the pictures he produced; Millet, for example, wrote to Rousseau at the end of 1861, "You must have seen Eugène Cuvelier. He showed me some very beautiful photographs taken in his hometown and others taken in the forest. They are made with taste and in some of the most beautiful spots that are sure to disappear."<sup>16</sup> While he admired Cuvelier's work, Millet thought of photographs as "casts from nature," which, "used as we use casts, may be of the greatest service."<sup>17</sup>

More significant, if less explicitly acknowledged at the time, are the ways in which the aesthetic syntax of photography influenced these painters. Specifically, Corot's muted palette and emphasis on form and tone rather than color,



Eugène Cuvelier. *Fampoux, near Arras*. Mid-1860s. Salted paper print from paper negative, 19.9 x 26.2 cm. Private collection

beginning in the 1850s, owe their origin to the subtle coloration and tonal gradations of photography.<sup>18</sup> Corot also borrowed from the photograph's rendering of the world the softly blurred foliage of his late landscapes, so similar to the way in which paper negatives recorded leaves stirred by the wind during exposures that could last as long as twenty minutes. Blurred as well in Corot's late paintings are far-off hills, trees, and buildings, in emulation of the camera's selective focus and in contrast with the artist's own earlier work, in which distant objects are described with softened color but remain sharply delineated.

Finally, what was most central to the art of both photographer and painter was the description of light. Because photographic emulsions at that time were not equally sensitive to all colors of the spectrum, photographers typically found it necessary to overexpose the sky in order to expose the landscape properly; this necessity, combined with the grainy texture and tonal exaggeration of the paper negative, produced an animated sense of light that seems to eat away at the edges of leaves and branches (ills. pp. 2, 8).<sup>19</sup> Light and shadow, atmosphere and substance, are recorded as dabs and patches of tone, evoking the sensation of effect rather than recording the details of form. This characteristic of photography, consciously exploited by its early practitioners, was precisely the point of departure for painting in the 1860s.

At the time of Corot's death, his studio contained more than two hundred photographs "after nature, by various artists," and it would be very surprising if landscapes by Adalbert and Eugène Cuvelier did not figure prominently among them.<sup>20</sup>

#### Afterword

In later life, Eugène and Louise Cuvelier retired to Thomery, a small town on the Seine just east of Fontainebleau, across the forest from Barbizon. Eugène died in 1900, at the age of sixty-three, and Louise four years later. Hélène, their only child, who was born in 1860, married late in life and died without children in 1905. Most of the family papers and pos-

sessions are said to have been destroyed in World War I.

Adalbert and Eugène Cuvelier were known to art historians for their connection with the *cliché-verre*, but few of their works were identified. Only in 1962 was a landscape photograph first recognized as having been made by Adalbert.<sup>21</sup> Eugène's photographs were slightly better known: A handful of beautiful salted paper prints were donated to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris by Paul Blondel in 1924, and by mid-century a few others were collected by specialists in nineteenth-century French photography. Only in the past decade, however, have the majority of Adalbert and Eugène Cuvelier's best prints surfaced.<sup>22</sup> We now know more than 250 images by Eugène—over half of his oeuvre, to judge by the numbers inscribed on his negatives.<sup>23</sup>

Although many details of the life of Eugène Cuvelier remain a mystery, the newly discovered prints ask us to consider this artist's significance in terms of his sensibilities and not just because of his presence in important artistic circles. He was neither the first nor the last to photograph in the Forest of Fontainebleau. Gustave Le Gray, the preeminent professional photographer in Paris, had worked there a decade earlier, and had found in the forest, as he did in so many other things, a subject that could be molded into heroic orchestral compositions. Unlike Le Gray, who was trained in the studio of Paul Delaroche, where grand history paintings were the order, Cuvelier was an amateur (as the word was understood in the nineteenth century) tutored by painters of intimate landscapes. He photographed for the pleasure of the heightened sensation that the act required and for the luxury of the material result. Cuvelier's photographs are intimate and seductive in their *matière*, their subjects observed and experienced instead of rigorously composed. They are the photographic equivalents of eloquently honest entries in a private journal rather than powerfully wrought declarations. Like the forest itself, Cuvelier's exquisite photographs invite us to escape momentarily from the modern urban world and to breathe the air of a place where nature impresses the senses and the soul.



Eugène Cuvelier. *Near the Cavern, after a Fire*. Early 1860s. Salted paper print from paper negative, 26 x 19.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, The Herbert and Nannette Rothschild Memorial Fund Gift, in memory of Judith Rothschild, 1996 (1996.303)

## Notes

1. Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, *Millet raconté par lui-même* (Paris: Henri Laurens, 1921), vol. 2, p. 58; Marie-Thérèse Caille, "L'Auberge Ganne," *Musée Municipal de l'École de Barbizon* (Moisenay: Éditions Gaud, 1994), pp. 36–38.
2. The marriage contract was signed in the Gannes' home on March 7, 1859, before Maître Eugène Vian, a notary from nearby Perthes. I thank François Lepage, Claudine Charpentier, and Maîtres Maurice and Quevremont for providing me with a copy of this document.
3. Adalbert-Auguste Cuvelier was born in Arras on March 2, 1812, and died in Boisieux-au-Mont on February 15, 1871. Eugène-Adalbert Cuvelier was born in Arras on April 6, 1837, and died in Thomery on October 31, 1900. Little archival research has been conducted on the Cuveliers; the best to date is found in Gaston-Louis Marchal and Patrick Wintrebret, *Arras et l'art au XIXe siècle: Dictionnaire des peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs, architectes, photographes, critiques et amateurs d'art (1800–1914)* (Arras: Mémoires de la Commission départementale d'Histoire et d'Archéologie du Pas-de-Calais, 1987), pp. 72–73.
4. Alfred Robaut, *L'Oeuvre de Corot: Catalogue raisonné et illustré* (Paris: 1905), vol. 1, p. 134.
5. For more on the *cliché-verre* in nineteenth-century France see Elizabeth Glassman and Marilyn F. Symmes, *Cliché-verre: Hand-Drawn, Light-Printed; A Survey of the Medium from 1839 to the Present* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1980).
6. Eugène Cuvelier's *cliché-verre* is illustrated in Glassman and Symmes, op. cit., p. 70.
7. According to the March 7, 1859, marriage contract, Adalbert provided a dowry for the couple of 50,000 francs in capital, against Eugène's future inheritance, to yield 2,500 francs per year in perpetuity. This alone was a comfortable, if not luxurious, amount to live on; a mason or carpenter in Amiens made 2.25 francs a day and the starting salary for an office worker in Paris was 1,000 francs per year (these statistics are for 1855).
8. I thank Marie-Thérèse Caille for this information, gleaned from the *Registre de police, 1848–61*, of the Auberge Ganne.
9. E. F., "Exposition artistique, agricole et industrielle," *Le Pas-de-Calais*, August 27, 1873.
10. Letter from Adalbert Cuvelier to Charles Chevalier, quoted in "Publications photographiques," *La Lumière*, August 12, 1854, p. 128. The letter continues in the issues of August 27, 1854 (p. 136), and September 9, 1854 (p. 144).
11. Constant Le Gentil, "L'Atelier de X. Dourlens (1856–1886)," *Courrier du Pas-de-Calais*, December 5–14, 1888.
12. A few photographs are inscribed "E.C. 1852." While this suggests that Eugène was already taking accomplished pictures by the age of fifteen, these photographs appear, instead, to have been made by Adalbert, initialed "A.C.," and only later changed to bear the initials of the son. Perhaps the two worked side-by-side and Eugène rightfully claimed a part of their creation. Compare, for instance, the Bibliothèque Nationale's photograph of a plow (A.1987-74391), inscribed "A.C. 1852," with the similar composition in the collection of André Jammes and Eugenia Janis, *The Art of French Calotype, with a Critical Dictionary of Photographers, 1845–1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pl. X. I thank Pierre-Marc Richard for this observation.
13. In 1864 he showed twelve views of Fontainebleau, entitled *Gorges d'Apemont, Belle-Croix, Barbizon, Point de vue du camp (3), Bas-Bréau (3), Au Bas-Bréau, Plateau de Belle-Croix*, and *Mare aux Pigeons*; in 1869 he exhibited six photographs of the Forest of Fontainebleau and four of the environs of Arras; and in 1870 he showed five views of Fontainebleau, three of Arras, two of the environs of Arras (including one of Fampoux), and one of Barbizon.
14. According to an 1854 letter by Adalbert ("Publications photographiques," op. cit., pp. 128, 136, 144), he used a variation of Humbert de Molard's recipe for negatives and Le Gray's for positives. In the Société française de photographie catalogues, Eugène specified that his photographs were made from unsized or unwaxed paper negatives ("procédé papier sec sans aucun en-collage" or "procédé papier non ciré sec").
15. Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), pp. 546–60. Claude-François Denecourt, known to friends as *le Sylvain*, charted the Forest of Fontainebleau, christened the trees and rocks, cleared hiking trails and marked them with small blue arrows, wrote and published maps and guidebooks, and single-handedly built a veritable tourist industry around his *promenades* through the forest. See also Eugenia Parry Janis, *The Photography of Gustave Le Gray* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago and University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 15–18, 45–53.
16. Letter from Millet to Rousseau, December 31, 1861, quoted in Alfred Sensier, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Jean-François Millet* (Paris: Paul Mantz, 1881), p. 223.
17. Edward Wheelwright, describing Millet's attitude toward photography, quoted in Aaron Scharf, *Art and Photography* (London: Allen Lane, 1968), pp. 66–67.
18. Gary Tinterow et al., *Corot* (New York: MMA, 1996), p. 265.
19. For more extensive discussions of the influence of photography on the paintings of Corot see Aaron Scharf, "Camille Corot and Landscape Photography," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, 59 (February 1962), pp. 99–102; Jammes and Janis, op. cit., pp. 82–91; Deborah Johnson, "Confluence and Influence: Photography and the Japanese Print in 1850," in *The Rise of Landscape Painting in France: Corot to Monet* (Manchester, N.H.: Currier Gallery of Art, 1991), pp. 78–98; and Margaret Stoffmann, "Between the Barbizon School and the Beginnings of Impressionism: The Landscape Photography of Gustave Le Gray," in *Pioneers of Landscape Photography: Gustave Le Gray, Carleton E. Watkins. Photographs from the Collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Frankfurt am Main: Städtische Galerie, 1993), pp. 90–106.
20. *Vente posthume Corot. Troisième partie: collection particulière de M. Corot*, June 7–9, 1875, lots 885–886, reproduced in Robaut, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 264; cited in Scharf, 1962, op. cit.
21. See Scharf, 1962, op. cit.
22. More than one hundred photographs by both father and son were found by the descendants of Louise Ganne's sister, Victoire, and sold in France over the last decade; many of these, including Adalbert's most impressive works, were bought by the Bibliothèque Nationale, with the rest finding their way to various collectors and institutions, among them the Metropolitan Museum. A second large cache of photographs by Eugène Cuvelier was discovered in 1989 in a packing crate—along with seascapes by Gustave Le Gray and landscapes of the American West by Carleton Watkins—in New England, leading to the speculation that they were collected and brought home by one of the many American painters who traveled to Barbizon in the early 1860s.
23. Only a few prints bear numbers higher than 400.

## Acknowledgments

The discovery in the 1980s of two rich caches of beautiful photographs by Eugène and Adalbert Cuvelier naturally excited much interest in these artists. Ulrike Gauss, Curator of the Graphische Sammlung, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, proposed an exhibition of photographs by Eugène and invited the collaboration of the Metropolitan Museum. Although ultimately we organized our own show so that it would include pictures by both father and son and would coincide with our Corot retrospective, we did so with the cooperation of the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart. For her initial work and her subsequent efforts on our behalf, we are grateful to Dr. Gauss; the exhibition of photographs by Eugène Cuvelier that she organized will open at the Staatsgalerie in spring 1997 and travel to the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, in summer 1997.

Our exhibition, "Eugène Cuvelier, Photographer in the Circle of Corot," is possible only because a dozen individuals and institutions generously agreed to lend us their finest prints. We owe our deepest debt of gratitude to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; Werner Bokelberg, Hamburg; Lee Gallery, Winchester, Massachusetts, and William L. Schaeffer Photographs, Chester, Connecticut; Ezra Mack, New York; Rolf Mayer, Stuttgart; Jay H. McDonald, Santa Monica; The Miller-Plummer Collection of Photography; the Musée d'Orsay, Paris; the Tel Aviv Museum of Art; Thomas Walther, New York; and two private collectors.

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For the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum, Anna Riehl made the shipping arrangements and handled related concerns. Nora Kennedy carried out necessary conservation treatments and Martin Bansbach prepared the American loans for exhibition. Dan Kershaw designed the exhibition, with graphics by Barbara Weiss and lighting by Zack Zanolli. Pamela Barr edited the wall texts. Elyse Topalian oversaw press relations. Barbara Burn directed all aspects of this publication, which was edited by Ellen Shultz, designed by Michael Shroyer, and produced by Matthew Pimm.

Finally, for their sponsorship of this exhibition and publication, we are proud to thank Springs Industries, who for the third time in as many years, has made it possible for us to present an international loan show of masterpieces of early French photography. On behalf of photography's larger public, we are grateful for their enlightened patronage, which allows us to introduce the work of Eugène Cuvelier to a wide audience.

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*Front cover:* Detail of illustration page 12

*Title page:* Adalbert Cuvelier. Corot's *Soir classique* in the Studio of Dutilleux. ca. 1852. Albumen silver print from paper negative, 16.9 x 14.3 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

*Back cover:* Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (French, 1796–1875). *The Ambush*. 1858. Salted paper print from *cliché-verre* negative, 22 x 15.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Gift, 1991 (1991.1072)

